Federation Housing, Inc. (FHI) was founded in 1970 in response to the growing need for housing for the elderly. Many seniors living on low, fixed incomes are unable to find affordable, safe and well-managed housing in the region. As they age, seniors struggle to find housing where they can remain independent and self-sufficient, but still gain access to supportive services and enjoy a sense of community.

The agency’s mission is to develop, build and manage safe, affordable rental housing for low-income seniors who are able to live independently and create environments where they can age in place, with dignity and not exhaust their financial resources.

Led by a dedicated “hands-on” board, FHI currently manages 11 rental apartment buildings which are home to more than 1,500 low-income elderly men and women. Nine sites are located on campuses in Northeast Philadelphia. There is also a site in Elkins Park, Montgomery County and one in Trevose, Bucks County. The agency is continuing to develop new properties to meet ongoing demand.

All of the apartment buildings are open to adults age 62-plus, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability. All residents are low-income or very low-income as measured by government standards. The average age of FHI residents is 80. Two-thirds of FHI residents are women, the majority of whom live alone.

FHI’s service coordinators meet regularly with residents and connect them with social services, including government entitlement programs and health providers.

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**Dear Reader**

Many thanks to all the presenters and the 225 attendees who participated in the November 13 Winter Resources Training at PCA. Attendees at this annual “train-the-trainer” event were updated on information to help their consumers access fuel, utility, weatherization, home repairs, food and financial assistance during the cold winter months.

Mark your calendars now for the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger’s annual Walk + Run Against Hunger on Saturday, April 11, 2015. Please join or sponsor a walker with the Emergency Fund Coalition team. Funds raised by the team will benefit the Emergency Food Fund. As in past years, the walk will begin in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and continue along Martin Luther King Drive. More details on this event will be available later this winter.

Our 26th annual Emergency Fund Luncheon and Rose Epstein Silent Auction fundraiser will take place on Thursday, June 4, 2015 at Cannstatter’s in Northeast Philadelphia. The coalition will be soliciting community input for the luncheon’s “Bright Star of Aging” service awards.

The coalition has much to be proud of. In the past fiscal year, the fund provided $284,318 in assistance and served 1,595 senior households. The majority (80%) of those dollars helped with heating costs. Since the Emergency Fund’s inception in 1979, more than 24,400 households have received assistance, with the total amount disbursed exceeding $2.93 million.

To donate to the Emergency Fund, visit the PCA website, www.pcaCares.org, and click on the “Donate” tab, or call the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040. The coalition wishes you a happy and productive 2015.

Sincerely,

Mark Weber, Emergency Fund Coalition Chair
Center Counselor
The Center at Journey’s Way

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Follow the Emergency Fund on social media

In an effort to maintain a regular and consistent social media presence, PCA has consolidated the Emergency Fund’s Facebook page into its own Facebook and Twitter pages. The EFund will no longer have its own Facebook page. To continue to receive updates about EFund news, activities and fundraisers, like PCA on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PCACares.org or follow PCA on Twitter at www.twitter.com/pcaCares_org.
CASE STUDY

Mercy LIFE
(Submitted by Suzanne Bass, social worker)

Mr. S., 62, is a member of the Mercy LIFE program and attends its adult day center in North Philadelphia. In addition to caring for himself, Mr. S. also cares for his daughter, 8, for whom he is the sole guardian.

Recently, Mr. S. showed me a shut-off notice he received from the gas company and asked if financial assistance was available to help with this. I immediately requested PCA Emergency Fund assistance to help him pay the overdue balance on his account and help avoid a shut-off. Mr. S.’ primary care physician at Mercy LIFE also submitted a form to the gas company detailing his patient’s medical needs and requested that a hold be put on his account until he could arrange an affordable payment plan.

Through the combined efforts of Mercy LIFE and the PCA Emergency Fund, Mr. S. was able to avoid service interruption, which would have been a very serious hardship. Both Mr. S. and Mercy LIFE are grateful for PCA’s generosity and appreciate that resources, such as the Emergency Fund, are available to those most in need.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) fast facts

- This federal program and its CRISIS component will be open until Friday, April 3, 2015, if funds allow.
- LIHEAP helps individuals who are having trouble paying their electric, gas or other energy bills.
- CRISIS assists with emergencies including reinstating utility service, fuel deliveries, and repairing leaking pipes and broken furnaces.

For further information, contact the LIHEAP Hotline at 215-560-1583 or the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040.

Refrigerator swap provides new energy-efficient refrigerators to low-income Philadelphia residents

As part of PECO’s Act 129 Low-Income Energy Efficiency Program, low-income residential electric customers whose refrigerator is 10 or more years old may receive a new refrigerator. To qualify, the household income must be at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, which is $17,505 for one person or $23,595 for two people (add $6,090 for each additional household member). Applicants may be homeowners or tenants, but must be a PECO residential electric customer who pays the electric bill. Refrigerators must be 10 years or older, in working condition, and 15, 18 or 21 cubic feet in size. New refrigerators will be an Energy Star-rated top-freezer model of the same size. There is a limit of one refrigerator per property. For more information, or to find out if you qualify, call 1-800-492-4262, weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.